

# Affinity Groups to BRGs: What's in a Name?

RECOGNIZE → PROMOTE → LEVERAGE

	Affinity Groups	Inclusion Networks	ERGs (Employee Resource Groups)	BRGs (Business Resource Groups)
GROUP	Exclusive membership	Open to all	Open to all	Open to all
PURPOSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a community for under-represented groups at the firm</li> <li>Internal/social focus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foster an inclusive environment</li> <li>Education focus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand membership of groups/create formal governance</li> <li>Professional development focus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrate business focus/ expand external network</li> <li>Business development focus</li> </ul>
OUTCOME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embrace diverse lawyers</li> <li>Foster social connections</li> <li>Build internal networks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate allies, adding new voices and views points</li> <li>Foster friendly culture</li> <li>Provide awareness and education</li> <li>Build relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forge connections with members and allies</li> <li>Build firm loyalty</li> <li>Attract top talent</li> <li>Provide platform for internal leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide business advantages</li> <li>Promote revenue generation</li> <li>Develop top talent</li> <li>Provide platform for external leadership</li> </ul>

Source: Jennifer Brown Consulting 2015 (adapted)

*While session materials and discussion will generally use the term "Affinity Group," terminology and structure vary greatly, and ideally should correlate to the group's function. When (re)naming groups, it is important to consider the group's purpose, goals and role within the firm's overall structure.*

## **SAMPLE AFFINITY GROUP MISSION STATEMENT**

SHILLITO, KING, JOHNSON & MOORE LLP

Affinity Groups have been established for Asian, Black, Hispanic, LGBT, and female lawyers of Shillito, King, Johnson & Moore LLP (SKJM). The primary purposes of these groups are to enhance the recruitment, retention, and advancement of lawyers from these specific groups and to foster a better understanding among all of the Firm's lawyers and staff of the unique issues facing members of these groups as they work at the Firm. Each Affinity Group will develop an agenda to enhance the personal and professional development of each of its members and to support the overall interests of the Firm.

### **THE PRIMARY GOALS OF EACH AFFINITY GROUP WILL BE AS FOLLOWS:**

- To provide a forum for its members to network with other members (whether in the same office or another Firm office)
- To raise concerns common to the applicable group (both at the staff, associate, counsel and partner level) to members of senior management
- To encourage its senior members to mentor the junior lawyers within the applicable group
- To work closely with the relevant Firm Committees to enhance the recruiting, professional development, and retention efforts by the applicable group
- To serve as a resource to the Diversity & Inclusion Committee to enhance the Firm's diversity efforts with respect to the applicable group
- To serve as a resource to the relevant firm committees in identifying charitable organizations and pro bono matters that are 1) of interest to the applicable group and 2) in furtherance of the Firm's diversity goals
- To liaise with members of affinity groups at the Firm's key clients (and potential new clients), thereby enhancing the Firm's institutional relationship with these clients and increasing client marketing opportunities among a broader range of attorneys within the Firm

---

## **ADDITIONAL SAMPLE AFFINITY GROUP MISSION STATEMENTS**

---

### **LAWYERS OF COLOR GROUP**

The mission of the Shillito, King, Johnson & Moore (SKJM) Multicultural Group is to support and advance the Firm's commitment to fostering an environment where individuals of diverse backgrounds and identities succeed professionally, fully contribute to the goals of the Firm and are involved in the Firm's leadership. The Group provides a forum for those who share and value all forms of differences between people, with a focus on diversity of race and ethnicity. The Group strives to enrich the professional experiences of the Firm's diverse lawyers with the goal of increasing retention and promotion in that population. To achieve these goals, the Group focuses its efforts on areas such as recruitment, professional development, mentoring, business development and community outreach.

### **MINORITY LAWYERS AFFINITY GROUP**

The Minority Lawyers Affinity Group was formed to further focus the Firm's commitment to the professional development of lawyers of color. As an arm of the Shillito, King, Johnson & Moore Diversity & Inclusion Committee, the group offers solid day-to-day support to meet the needs of minority lawyers practicing in a large law firm. Members regularly meet with Firm leadership and work to internally market the diverse talent of the group to the rest of the Firm. This helps provide access to opportunities that may not present themselves otherwise.

---

## **SAMPLE GROUP-SPECIFIC MISSION STATEMENTS**

---

### **AVALANCHE**

The Association of Various Asia-interested Lawyers Aligned for Non-discrimination, Community, Honor and Excellence (AVALANCHE) promotes mentorship, community outreach and cultural awareness for Asian-heritage and Asia-interested lawyers throughout the Firm

### **PRIDE**

Pride provides leadership and support for an inclusive and respectful environment for the Firm's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) colleagues and serves as a catalyst for candid dialogue on issues of concern to the LGBT community

### **WOMEN'S INITIATIVE**

The SKJM Women's Initiative is committed to creating an environment where female lawyers thrive, increasing the Firm's ability to provide unparalleled client service.

#### **We strive to meet this goal through the tenets of our mission statement:**

- Secure leadership roles for women
- Recruit and retain the best female lawyers in the country
- Create diverse client service teams
- Mentor the next generation of women leaders

### **WOMEN'S MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

The Women's Management Council of SKJM assists the Firm's women lawyers in developing the necessary legal skills, mentoring relationships and marketing opportunities that will support their promotion into the partnership. This proactive group of SKJM women partners serves as a catalyst for programs targeting the unique challenges facing women practitioners.

<p><b>DIVERSITY &amp; INCLUSION COMMITTEE</b></p> <p><b>SAMPLE AFFINITY GROUP INTEREST FORM</b></p>
---

The Diversity & Inclusion Committee at Shillito, King, Johnson & Moore LLP sponsors the following affinity groups for its lawyers: Black/African American Affinity Group; Asian-Pacific American Affinity Group; Hispanic/Latino Affinity Group; LGBT Affinity Group; Parent Affinity Group and the Veteran Affinity Group. Affinity groups are comprised of both female and male lawyers from varying practice areas and levels of seniority, including associates, senior attorneys, counsel and partners. The affinity groups organize social events, conduct CLEs and raise awareness of topics relevant to the members of the group and the Firm.

Any lawyer may become a member based on affinity or individual interest. If you would like to be added to one or more of the Firm’s affinity group distribution lists, please fill out this form to be included.

<b>NAME</b>	<b>DATE</b>
-------------	-------------

**AFFINITY GROUP:**

- |   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN | <input type="checkbox"/> LGBT    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ASIAN-PACIFIC AMERICAN | <input type="checkbox"/> PARENT  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HISPANIC/LATINO        | <input type="checkbox"/> VETERAN |

**COMMENTS (optional):**

---



---



---



---



---



---

<b>CONTACTS</b>		
<b>AFFINITY GROUP</b>	<b>COMMITTEE MEMBER(S)</b>	<b>EXTENSION(S)</b>
BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN AFFINITY GROUP		
ASIAN-PACIFIC AMERICAN AFFINITY GROUP		
HISPANIC/LATINO AFFINITY GROUP		
LGBT AFFINITY GROUP		
PARENT AFFINITY GROUP		
VETERAN AFFINITY GROUP		

## **SAMPLE AFFINITY GROUP 2016 BUDGET REQUEST FORM**

SHILLITO, KING, JOHNSON & MOORE LLP

**AFFINITY GROUP NAME:**

**OFFICE LOCATION:**

**CHAIR/CO-CHAIRS:**

**EXECUTIVE SPONSOR(S):**

**NUMBER OF MEMBERS:**

**REQUESTED BY:**

### **AFFINITY GROUP GUIDELINES FOR 2016 BUDGET REQUESTS**

When requesting budget, please bear in mind the following guidelines:

- **Impactful activities:** Affinity Group activities should impact professional development, client engagement and how we attract, recruit, retain and engage a diverse and inclusive workforce leading to cultural and behavioral changes, as well as influencing policies and communications
- **Business Principles:** Affinity Groups' strategy and activities should be closely aligned to the Firm's business principles, namely (\_\_\_\_\_)
- **Stakeholders:** Activities should have a broad reach, thus considering employees, clients and the larger community
- **ROI:** When organizing activities, key performance measures should be considered
- Please remember to include any of the following projected costs where applicable: branded merchandise (giveaways, marketing materials, etc.), approximate catering costs for events, tables for award ceremonies, memberships and costs associated with attending external events or conferences
- Please note that memberships with external diversity organizations should be coordinated with the Diversity & Inclusion department

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR BUDGET REQUEST FORM TO: ( \_\_\_\_\_ )

<b>AFFINITY GROUP BUDGET REQUEST DETAILS</b>			
<b>PROPOSED ACTIVITY/EVENT</b>	<b>PROJECTED DATE/TIMELINE</b>	<b>IMPACT AND KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES</b>	<b>BUDGET AMOUNT REQUESTED*</b>

**TOTAL BUDGET REQUESTED**

--

**AFFINITY GROUP EXECUTIVE SPONSOR(S) APPROVAL : Y/N (INSERT NAME/S)**

**AFFINITY GROUP CHAIR/CO-CHAIR(S) SIGN OFF: Y/N (INSERT NAME/S)**

\*Where any individual request is new and exceeds \$10,000, please attach additional information if submitting without partner approval/signoff

# (AFFINITY GROUP NAME) STRATEGY/BUSINESS PLAN 2016

(AFFINITY GROUP NAME) STRATEGY/BUSINESS PLAN 2016			
AIMS	MEASURES OF SUCCESS		
<p><b>ENTER YOUR MISSION STATEMENT</b></p>	<p><b>ENTER MEASURES OF SUCCESS AND IMPACT OF THE AFFINITY GROUP'S ACTIVITIES</b></p>		
OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	FUTURE PROJECTS AND FOCUS AREAS	
<p><b>KEY AREAS TO CONSIDER:</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid #00AEEF; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center; background-color: #00AEEF; color: white; margin: 0;">BRAND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Client</li> <li>Employment</li> </ul> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #00AEEF; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center; background-color: #00AEEF; color: white; margin: 0;">DEVELOPMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members' needs</li> <li>Mentoring, role models, networking</li> <li>Training/development</li> </ul> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #00AEEF; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center; background-color: #00AEEF; color: white; margin: 0;">COMMUNITY/CSR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus (selected charitable organizations)</li> <li>Empowering community members</li> </ul> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #00AEEF; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center; background-color: #00AEEF; color: white; margin: 0;">DISCUSSION FORUM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forum to bring issues to the table</li> <li>Engaging members and non-members</li> <li>Change agent--collective voice</li> </ul> </div>			

(SAMPLE)